



**Nebraska Head Start-State
Collaboration Office
Quarterly Report # 33**

1-1-05 through 3-31-05

Eleanor Kirkland, Director
402-471-3501
kirkland@nde.state.ne.us

Melody Hobson, Education Consultant
402-471-0263
melodyhobson@nde.state.ne.us

Outcome: Head Start and State Agencies have solid connections and positive working relationships to promote and enhance early childhood partnerships and program development on behalf of Head Start eligible children and families.

Child Care:

- HSSCO contracted with the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children (NeAEYC) to survey Nebraska Head Start grantees regarding their partnerships with community child care and local school districts. The surveys were completed in December and January and the preliminary results were presented in January at the networking session. Plans for surveys of Head Start child care and school partners are scheduled for the second quarter of 2005.
- The Nebraska HSSCO Director continues to provide input on the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines (See the guidelines at www.nde.state.ne.us/ECH/ECH.html). The preschool guidelines have been printed and the infant/toddler guidelines are in their third draft. The preschool guidelines were “unveiled” in March at the Early Childhood Connections Conference held at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Kearney.

Children with Disabilities:

- HSSCO continues to support Head Start programs and their early intervention partners in planning and developing the memorandum of agreement between Head Start and public schools. HSSCO presented at the Networking Session for Disabilities and Mental Health Coordinators in January (See attached agenda).
- HSSCO participated in the General Supervision Enhancement Grant (GSEG) transdisciplinary team meeting in January. The GSEG grant will be studying positive behavior supports in both before and after-school settings and in prekindergarten settings.

- HSSCO staff participated in the Early Childhood Outcomes state level partners meeting March 2nd, and the Early Childhood Outcomes statewide stakeholders meeting March 3rd. These meetings provided background for requirements from the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Additionally, comparisons between reporting requirements and data needs for multiple early childhood programs were discussed.
- HSSCO and early intervention staff from NDE continue to discuss the implications for Head Start and Early Head Start grantees regarding the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) that requires mandatory referral to the Early Development Network for substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect.

Education/Professional Development

- HSSCO was represented on the planning team for the Early Childhood Connections Conference. The conference was held March 10-12 in Kearney. This year the theme for the conference was the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3-5. Keynote presenter Catherine Scott-Little outlined early learning standards from across the country and highlighted the content of Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines.
- NeAEYC completed a pilot project to support Spanish-speaking early childhood professionals. HSSCO funds supported the project (See attachment).
- HSSCO Director is an active member of the Nebraska Kindergarten Conference planning team. The Conference will be held July 12-14, in Kearney NE. There will be a strand of sessions relating to prekindergarten issues. The focus of the prekindergarten sessions will be transitions/school readiness. HSSCO funds will support the prekindergarten strand. Invitations will go to Head Start programs and their community action agency partners. This conference strand is designed to provide valuable opportunities for Head Start staff and other early childhood education providers to network with kindergarten/elementary teachers and to learn and share effective transition practices across placements for children.
- HSSCO continues to be a resource for the University of Nebraska at Kearney Early Childhood Professional Development Grant (ECPD). This grant is designed to assist Head Start programs access high quality credit bearing classes for staff. The grant includes mentoring for Head Start teachers. Teacher mentor training was held Wednesday, March 9. HSSCO is a member of the ECPD Advisory committee, which will meet in April.

Health:

- The Nebraska HSSCO Director is on the Leadership Team for the Maternal Child Health Early Childhood Systems Integration Project, “Together for Kids and Families” and is the co-chair of the Data Work Group. The most recent meeting of the data group was held on March 24, 2005; indicators and outcomes are being reviewed for the strategic plan (See attached minutes of Leadership Team meeting).
- HSSCO helped support Dental Days VII. Dental Days are presented annually by the University of Nebraska Medical Center’s College of Dentistry. This year, Dental Days was held in February. One hundred-fifty children received dental services and resource about dental health. HSSCO provided a Spanish translator and contributed resources to the program. This year, low-income children from Lexington, Norfolk, Madison, Hastings, and Lincoln received services. Head Start Directors from those communities promoted the event with Head Start families.

Welfare Reform:

- George Kahlandt, administrator for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Betty Medinger administrator for Child Care, Community Services Block Grant, and Homeless Assistance Program collaborated to create a memorandum regarding child care assistance for children in Head Start. HSSCO Director has forwarded the memo to administrators at Region VII office for their consideration.

Family Literacy:

- Even Start Technical Assistance funds are being used in Regional Training Coalitions to enhance the literacy training in areas where Even Start programs operate. Head Start programs are active in the Regional Training Coalitions throughout the state and are encouraged to plan with their Even Start partners related to professional development needs.

Homeless Services:

- The Homeless Coordinator for NDE was invited to the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) Gaps and Barriers committee to provide technical assistance and updates to committee members. HSSCO Director disseminated information to constituents regarding the Homeless Coordinator’s report.
- HSSCO provided information regarding the National Homelessness conference to the Nebraska Title I Homeless Coordinator.

Community Services:

- The first Leaders in Partnership for Early Learning Academy (LiPeL) was held on March 29-31, 2005 in Kearney, NE. This training opportunity was for administrative staff at Head Start programs and community action agencies to hone aspects of their administrative skills and to address results management. Approximately 40 administrators from community action agencies and Nebraska Head Start programs attended this training, along with Board and Policy Council Chairpersons (See attached supplemental report).
- The second LiPeL academy is scheduled for April 25-27 at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Kearney. This academy is for middle level and fiscal management in Head Start and community action agencies.
- Terry Rohren, working on behalf of HSSCO, has created a draft and completed first round edits for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Head Start and Community Action in Nebraska. The stakeholders will review the draft in June in conjunction with the annual Community Action Nebraska conference.

Other:

- Nebraska's HSSCO Director is a member of the Leadership Team for the Early Childhood Policy Study. NDE was directed to complete the study by the Nebraska State Board of Education. Input from families, Head Start program personnel, child care providers, elementary educators and administrators was solicited. Draft recommendations were completed at the end of December 2004. The State Board of Education accepted the initial draft of the policy report for dissemination and discussion at their January meeting. HSSCO staff has been active in recruiting participants for the State Board of Education's Policy Partner Forums that are being held throughout the state to discuss and provide further input on the Early Childhood Policy Study.
- Nebraska's HSSCO staff are facilitating groups at each of the Policy Partner Forums. The forums have been held in Lincoln, Norfolk and Omaha. Upcoming forums will be held in Grand Island, Gering, and McCook.
- Head Start-State Collaboration Office provides ongoing technical assistance to the Nebraska ECICC. HSSCO Director is a member of the Gaps and Barriers Standing Committee. This group works to eliminate barriers for all children (both with and without disabilities) throughout the state.
- Nebraska HSSCO Director represented the Head Start-State Collaboration National Network in a Mathematica Policy Research study of the Head Start Technical Assistance Quality Assurance System. The Head Start Bureau commissioned the study.

- HSSCO, in collaboration with the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, is beginning a study of fatherhood issues in Nebraska Head Start programs. Dr. Joseph White with the Dakota Fatherhood Initiative is conducting the study. First year information will provide baseline data of fatherhood factors in Head Start programs.